

# THE ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT AND ITS PUBLICATIONS







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FOLLOWING THE RISE OF INITIATIVES IN DEFENCE OF NATURE, AND FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF INTENSE GROWTH, ECOLOGY IN THE PAÏSOS CATALANS IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS HAS MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO A NEW WAY OF CONCEIVING AND LIVING IN THE WORLD.

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**T**he first public manifestations of what we now know as ecology took place in the Països Catalans in the seventies. Civic dignity was beginning to react to the general deterioration in the country. During these years, an extraordinary number of initiatives and actions in defence of nature saw the light of day and several groups working in this field were founded.

An important element behind this activity was the Campaign for the Safeguard of the Natural Heritage, promoted by the Congrés de Cultura Catalana, which organised hundreds of events all over the Països Catalans between 1976 and 1977. The Campaign was the starting point for groups and organisations like the Department of Nature of the Roca y Galès Foundation. Those years saw the founding of important bodies such as the Balearic Ornithological Group, one of the oldest (1973), and the League for the Defence of the Natural Heritage (DEPANA), which held its founding meeting at the home of the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya in 1976.

Of the publications, in 1975 the magazine *Muntanya*, of the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya, published an initial

series of articles under the title "Environmental Problems in Catalonia". An exhaustive review of the ecological situation in the country was provided by *Natura ús i abús: Llibre Blanc de la Gestió de la Natura als Països Catalans*, published by the Catalan Institution of Natural History for the national book-day in 1976. The Barcelona Provincial Corporation's collection *Quaderns d'Ecologia Aplicada* also started publication that same year.

In 1977, Jaume Terrades published *Ecologia i Educació Ambiental*, the first great theoretical contribution in our country. The Palau d'Esports on Montjuïc was the setting for the exhibition "Let's Save Catalonia for Democracy", devoted fundamentally to the defence of the natural heritage.

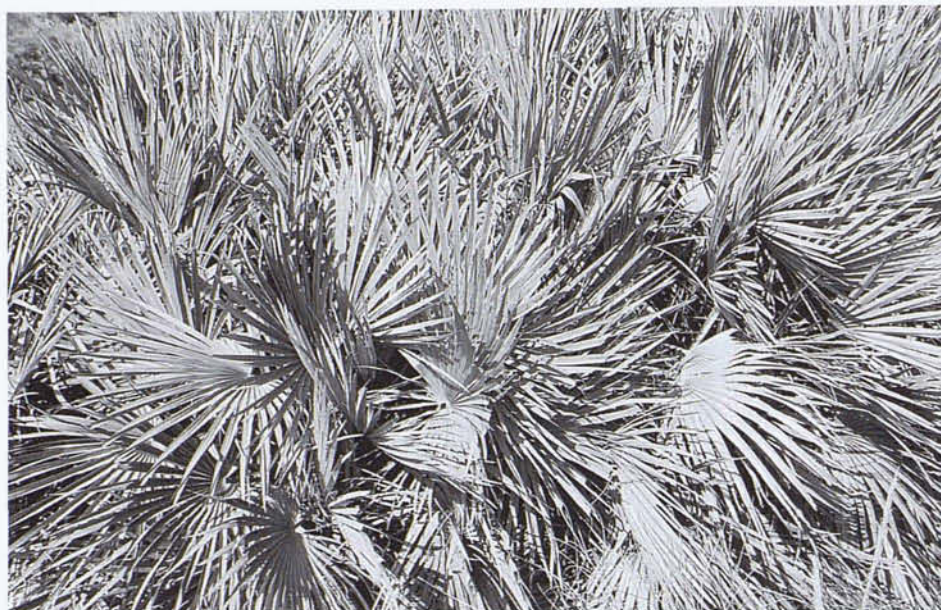
In February that same year, the magazine *Ajoblanco* published its first monographic number, on renewable energies, which it called "Free Energies". Later, in the summer, the country's first two specifically ecological magazines came out in Barcelona. One was *Userda*, with a first number devoted to political parties and signed by the Ecological Journalists Collective. The other was *Alfalfa: revis-*

*ta de crítica ecológica y alternativas*. The bulletin of the Anti-nuclear Committee of Catalonia, *Bien, Boletín de Información de Energía Nuclear*, also made its appearance.

Vicenç Fisas's book *Centrales nucleares: imperialismo tecnológico y proliferación nuclear* appeared in 1978, the same as the first number of the magazine *Integral, Salud y vida Natural*, currently the most widely read commercial publication on ecological issues. That same year Ramon Folch published *Sobre ecologismo y ecología aplicada*.

The nature guides that began to appear in the mid-seventies have done a lot to raise our level of environmental education. And, of course, a lot of articles appeared in magazines such as *Perspectiva Escolar* or *Cuadernos de Pedagogía*, especially after 1978. The most specific guide, *Educació Ambiental*, appeared in 1987, published by the Catalan Environmental Education Society. The most important mobilizations of the eighties were the anti-nuclear protests. There were various debates, demonstrations and reports against nuclear proliferation and the use of uranium. The Movement of Town Halls for a Nuclear Moratorium (CA-





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MON) was created, as well as various Anti-uranium Committees. As a result, in June 1981 a manifesto was presented to the Catalan Parliament "For Nuclear-Free Països Catalans".

In July 1980, the magazine *Ciència. Revista Catalana de Ciència i Tecnologia* was presented. Its first number included the report by the Institute of Catalan Studies on uranium and the conclusions of the CAMON-I study. Various magazines were published during this period, such as *La Tomaquera*, by the Anti-uranium Committee of Osona, and *Fullaraca*, published by the ecologists group of Girona. In 1982, the Anti-nuclear and Ecologist Board presented its bulletin *Alarma*. That same year the Green Assembly brought out its magazine *Terra Verda*.

Two books were published: *El combat ecologista a Catalunya*, by Xavier García, Jaume Reixach and Santi Vilanova, and *La febre de l'Urani*, by Castellà Gasol. In spring 1982, *Integral* published a monographic number on different ways of using solar energy – "El sol para todos" –, and in the autumn the book *Catalunya sota el perill de l'urani* was published, by Oriol Cabre, Pere Carbonell, Josep Puig and Santi Vilanova. In 1983, the ecologist journalist Xavier García published the book *Supervivència 2000*.

In 1984 the Scientists and Experts Group for a Non-Nuclear Future publicized their proposal "For the use of renewable energy sources". The Catalan Ecology Movement became Green Alternative and started publishing its bulletin *L'Alternatiu*. Joan Martínez Alió published *L'ecologisme i l'economia*. In November, the first volume of the *Història Natural dels Països Catalans* appeared, edited by Ramon Folch and published by Enciclopèdia Catalana.

In 1985, the Catalan Society for Environmental Education and the Balearic Society for Environmental Education were founded simultaneously. In 1987 the *Full dels Grups d'Estudi i Defensa de la Natura* was published to promote mutual understanding and exchange.

The second volume of the *Llibre Blanc de la Gestió de la Natura al Països Catalans*, co-ordinated by Ramon Folch, was presented in 1989, duly revised and updated. Another book published was *D'una Terra a un Món*, a recapitulation of the World Commission on Environment and Development. An International Symposium was held on the subject of "A Single Earth" and the talks were subsequently published in book form.

Also in 1989, the Centre for Health Analyses and Programmes presented the

book *Les radiacions ionitzants i la salut*, edited by Pere Carbonell.

In 1990, the magazine *Medi Ambient* began to be published by the Generalitat's Directorate General for the Environment, as it was called then, as well as the twice-yearly magazine *Ecologia Política*, in association with other international magazines devoted to highlighting the relations between social and political ecology.

A large part of the ecologists groups publish their own bulletins. Amongst the best-known are *DEPANA en acció*, published by the League for the Defence of the Natural Heritage; *Na Tura*, published by the Naturalist and Ecology Group of the Garrotxa; *Gepec informa*, by the Group for the Study and Protection of the Ecosystems of el Camp; *Paratges de Ponent*, published by the Western Catalonia Institute for the Conservation and Study of the Natural Surroundings.

In 1992, the International Symposium "A Single Earth-For an Ecological Europe" was held again and the results subsequently published.

In September 1993, the Centre UNESCO de Catalunya, first of all in collaboration with UNESCO, started publishing *All of us, Environmental Education Dossiers*, with Catalan, English, French and Spanish versions. This magazine is financed





by the Department of the Environment of the Generalitat and is today one of the leading publications in Catalonia.

In the Balearics, ecologist concerns and initiatives centre on the Balearic Ornithological and Nature Defence Group, founded in 1973. Today this organisation, which has about 5,000 members in the Balearic Isles, publishes *L'ecologista*, its six-monthly informative organ, and an annual bulletin of a scientific nature, the *Anuari Ornitològic de les Balears*. The group's Menorca branch also publishes the magazine *Socarrel*.

In the País Valencià there are about fifty ecologists groups. The main ones are the Ecologists Federation of the País Valencià, which is made up of some 24 organisations, and the Agró Ecologists Group, which has more than 1,000 members and is one of the oldest and most active groups. Since 1983 it has published *La Casa Verda*, a twice-monthly newspaper with a circulation of 2,500 and one of the oldest and most important publications in the País Valencià.

In Catalonia North there is the Fédération Catalane des Espaces Naturels et de l'Environnement, which consists of some thirty local groups. Created in 1983, it has 3,000 members. One of the associated groups publishes a monthly bulletin of activities and opinions called *ALFHA*.

"The Greens" have also been present in Catalonia North since 1985.

Since 1986, Greenpeace has also been involved in a campaign to defend the Mediterranean. At present it has 16,000 members in Catalonia. As well as its quarterly magazine which is distributed all over the Spanish state, since 1993 the material directed at the Principality, the País Valencià and the Balearics has been published in Catalan.

Taking stock of the publishing scene surrounding all these movements, we see that in the seventies and early eighties there was a far more obvious separation between environmentalist, or protectionist, positions, and the truly ecological positions, which were critical of the whole industrial model of society and the danger of the nuclear threat and indignant over the left wing's ethical desertion before the exploitation of nature and the third world. The eighties were also marked by a change in awareness as regards the environment. Destruction, originally on a local scale, was beginning to affect ever larger regions of the planet, until finally the global threat our model of development represents for the planet became evident.

Because of this, attitudes gradually coalesced around more and more elaborate and ambitious ideas. This was the case

with DEPANA, which was founded along clearly conservationist lines and which has become a body of new-style ecology groups with 6,000 members.

Certainly, the importance of ecology today is obvious and the movement's ideals are spreading all over the world. There is a profusion of more or less ecological products. Ecology is a selling-point used in advertising and even in politics. The meaning of environmental issues is becoming part of the public's cultural baggage and in future people will hardly be considered educated unless they adopt attitudes deriving from this knowledge.

From its early days as a profetic and margined movement, ecology is now helping to shape a new post-industrial ideology. The ecology movement, having pioneered a reformulation of the relations between human beings and their surroundings and an indispensable planetary solidarity, is an essential ferment for the future. In the service of progress and the positive transformation of reality, it opens the doors to a new conception of the world. Economists and politicians must all recognize the essential ties men and women have with nature and the opportunities arising from them. Ecology is increasingly becoming a fundamental element in redefining the Catalan nation. ■